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SHAKESPEARE'S "TEMPEST."

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The great and striking peculiarity of this play is that its action lies wholly in the ideal world. It differs, therefore, from every other work of Shakespeare in the character of its mediation. Our poet, in most of his dramas, portrays the real world, and exhibits man as acting from clear conscious motives, and not from supernatural influences. But here he completely reverses his procedure; from beginning to end the chief instrumentalities of the poem are external; its conflicts and solutions are brought about by powers seemingly beyond human might and intelligence. It should, however, be classified with "As You Like it" and "Midsummer Night's Dream," in both of which the ideal world is the grand mediating principle. But in these two plays the real world is also present, and there is in the course of the action a transition from one to the other. Hence, too, there follows a change of place and time, and the so-called unities must be violated. But the "Tempest" has not this double element: with the first scene we are in the magic realm of the island and its influences, which do not cease till the last line of the play. Hence it is more unique, more homogeneous, than the two dramas before mentioned; the unities of time and place can be observed, and the action lies wholly in the ideal world.

It is now the duty of the interpreter to translate these poetic forms and mediations into Thought. Thus he gives the same meaning, the same content, which is found in the play; but he addresses the Reason and Understanding instead of the Imagination. What Shakespeare expresses in poetry he must express in prose, and moreover must supply the logical nexus which the imaginative form cannot give. Hence, above all things, let him not fall into the error of merely substituting one poetical shape for another, whereby nothing is explained and only confusion is increased. If Prospero is called Shakespeare, or by any other name, what is gained by the change? The same difficulties remain for Thought as before. The task is not easy, nor is it likely to give satisfaction at first to the reader; for these beautiful ideal shapes must perish before our eyes and be transformed into the dry, abstract forms of prose. The contrast is striking, perhaps repulsive; but, if we wish to comprehend and not merely to enjoy Shakespeare, there is no alternative.

Let us bring before our minds the leading elements of the play. First, Alonso and his company represent the real world; but they have arrived at a magic isle where they are under the sway of unknown external agencies. Within certain limits they still can act through themselves, but their chief movements are determined from without by the ideal world, Ariel and his spirits, who constitute the second element. Thus the fact is indicated that the ideal, supernatural world is master of the real, natural world. Thirdly, there is Prospero, a being who commands both, yet partakes of both these principles, the real and the ideal, the natural and the supernatural: he is connected by nationality and even by family with those in the ship, but is at the same time lord of Ariel and of the spirit-world, who fulfil his behests with implicit obedience.

Here appears the two-fold nature of Prospero, which is the pivotal point of the drama, and hence its comprehension must be our first object. He controls the elements, he is gifted with foresight, he possesses absolute power; yet he has been expelled from his throne and country. To be sure, there is the difference of time between his expulsion and his present greatness, but this cannot adequately account for the change. Let us try to explain these two elements of his

character, as they have been elaborated fully by the poet in the course of the drama. In the first place, Prospero must manifest the finite side of his nature. As an individual, he comes in contact with other individuals and things; in general, with the realm of finitude in which he himself is finite. Limitation begets struggle; thus arise the collisions of life. Many men, it seems, have been his superiors in these struggles; his brother is a much more practical man—has de-throned him and driven him off. Such is Prospero the individual, and as such he collides with various forms of finite existence. He has been hitherto defeated in these conflicts. This is the one element. But Prospero also possesses the side of universality; he is spirit, intelligence, which comprehends, solves, and portrays all the collisions of the finite world. It is only through long discipline and devoted study that he has attained this power. His pursuit of knowledge, moreover, cost him his dukedom, and hence was the source of his chief conflict—that with his brother. He thus stands for spirit in its highest potency, the Universal, but he is at the same time individual, and hence is exposed to the realm of finite relation and struggle, which, however, his reason must bring into a harmonious unity.

But his spiritual activity is mostly confined to a special form of intelligence, that form which embodies its content in pictures and symbols, namely, the creative Imagination. Prospero does not employ pure thought, but poetic shapes and images. He must therefore be the Poet, who has within him the world in ideal forms, and hence possesses over it an absolute power. He calls up from the vasty deep whatever shapes he wishes in order to execute his purposes and perform his mediations. Thus he solves all the contradictions in which he as an individual is involved, and subdues all the influences which come within his magic circle. For he is this universal power, and in the sphere of ideality, in the realm of spirit, nothing can resist him. The revenge of Prospero is therefore ideal, for certainly our poet would never have taken such instrumentalities to portray a real revenge. Moreover, the play must end in reconciliation, the harmony of the Individual with the Universal; for spirit possesses

just this power over the conflicts of finite existence: it must show itself to be master.

In this way we can account for the commanding position of Prospero in the drama. He is the grand central figure, the absolute power who controls ultimately the movements of every person and from whom all the action proceeds. The form of mediation is therefore external; but, truly considered, Prospero is no *deus ex machina*, no merely external divinity brought in to cut the knot that cannot be untied. The interpretation must always exhibit him inside of the action; the clew is his double nature. As an individual, he is engaged in conflict; but then he steps back, beholds and portrays that conflict, and solves it through spirit in the form of Imagination. He is therefore the mediator of his own collisions; thus externality falls away. The solution is hence not external, which would be the case if the absolute power simply stood outside of the action, and commanded everything to take place. It is the special duty of the critic to explain these external mediations, of which the play is full, into a clear, spiritual signification.

Prospero is, therefore, the mighty spirit standing behind and portraying the collisions of his own individual life and of finite existence generally. But this is not enough to account for his activity. He could easily put his experiences and struggles in a drama without invoking the aid of the supernatural world. The necessity of this element must be seen. If he would give a complete picture of his own activity, he must not only portray the above-mentioned conflicts, but also portray himself as portraying them. In other words, he must depict himself as Poet, as Universal; he must give an account of his own process, and that account must also be in a poetic form. This will push the Imagination to the very verge of its powers, for thus it must do what abstract thought alone can usually do: namely, it must comprehend and portray itself. Hence comes the external form representing it as the absolute master over its materials.

The Drama thus attempts to account for itself in a drama, in its own form. Having swept over the whole field of life, and portrayed every species of collision, it now comes to

grasp itself, its own process. Thus it becomes truly universal, a complete totality; for it takes in the world and itself too. This play is often considered Shakespeare's last, and it may be regarded as a final summing up of his activity, or, indeed, that of any great poet. In his other works he has portrayed the manifold variety of collisions, but now he portrays them being portrayed. Here he reaches, if he does not transgress, the limit of dramatic representation; he can only use strange symbolical shapes to indicate his meaning.

It is now time to see the poem springing from the two-fold nature of Prospero. As individual, we must expect to behold him involved in some of the ordinary dramatic collisions. An analysis will reveal three of them all in regular gradation of importance. First, there arises the collision in the Family—Prospero the father, on the one hand, against the lovers Ferdinand and Miranda, on the other. The old conflict is depicted: the choice of the daughter is opposed by the will of the parent. Secondly, there is portrayed the collision in the State: Prospero, the rightful ruler of Milan, against the usurper Antonio, supported by the king of Naples, both of whom with followers are on board the newly-arrived ship. Thirdly, there is the more general collision which may be stated to be between rationality and sensuality, the former represented by Prospero and Ariel, the latter by Caliban with Trinculo and Stephano. The Sensual rises up against the Rational in all its forms, in institutions and even in Art, as well as in Intelligence. Such is the material for Imagination to work upon. But the other side must not be forgotten. The Imagination, at the same time, portrays itself elaborating this content. The Poet is not only going to make the drama, but is going to show himself making it. This gives the ideal element, representing Prospero as having the absolute power of mediating all the collisions of his individual existence.

Such are the threads which must be carefully kept before the mind in order to comprehend the organization of the play. Next, the entire movement of the action must be considered. It is three-fold. In the first place, there is the expulsion of Prospero by the rulers in the ship, who have now come into his power; this is the wrong done to Prospero, and consti-

tutes the pre-supposition of the drama. Next follows the punishment of this wrong in the island, the realm of Prospero, through his spirit-powers. Lastly, the reconciliation of the two sides by the repentance of the guilty and forgiveness of the injured, when we have the final harmony resulting from the conflict. It, therefore, is connected with that class of Shakespeare's plays in which wrong is atoned for by repentance, and the criminal escapes by "heart's sorrow" the punishment of death, the legitimate consequence of his deed.

Let us now take the poem in hand and see whether these things, with a reasonable interpretation, can be found in it, or whether they are the absurd subtleties of the critic's fancy. First comes the tempest, from which the drama takes its name, the effect of which is to divide the ship's company into three parts, corresponding to the three threads above mentioned, and to scatter them into different portions of the island. But the peculiarity of this tempest is, as we learn in the next scene, that Prospero has brought it about through Ariel; it is, therefore, not a tempest which has taken place through natural causes, but through spiritual causes: it is, evidently, a poetical tempest. For certainly Shakespeare would not have us believe that storms are produced by spirits ordinarily; but this one certainly is. What, then, does the author mean? for his conduct here assuredly needs explanation. I think he tells us, in saying that Ariel, by command of Prospero, caused the tempest and dispersed the company, that tempests are called up by the Poet—that they are a poetical instrument employed to bring about a separation of parties, and to scatter them into different places as here. We are, therefore, led to inquire whether Shakespeare himself has ever employed this means in any of his dramas. Accordingly, we find the same instrumentality in "Twelfth Night" and "Comedy of Errors" used for the same purpose. It is an artifice of the Poet for scattering, or possibly uniting, his characters in an external manner. Here then, in the very first scene, the Poet is portraying his own process.

The second scene of the First Act, which now follows, is the most important one in the play, for it gives the key to the action. A careful analysis of all its elements will therefore be necessary. First appears before us the Family, the pri-

mary relation of man—here that of father and daughter, the latter of whom speaks in the first line of her parent's art, which she herself, being purely individual, does not possess, but still knows of. The relation is a natural one, not spiritual, between parent and child. She is excited by sympathy for the sufferers, when the father assures her that no one has perished—in fact, no one can perish—in the vessel. Again we ask the question, why this confidence of Prospero that all will be saved? The prevision in his art, which he speaks of, is that of the Poet, who ordains beforehand, by the strictest necessity, the course of the action and the fate of the characters, and knows what kind of a drama he is going to write. He lays down his magic mantle—that is, he assumes the individual relation to his daughter—and then begins to give an account of his life and conflicts as an individual. Here, then, he relates his first collision: a brother, with the aid of a foreign king, has driven him from his dukedom. Nor does Prospero conceal the cause of his banishment. He neglected the Practical for the Theoretical; he handed over the administration of his government to others, and devoted his time to his books, his study, his art. The logic of this transition is evident. He cuts loose from the real world, and the real world retorts by cutting loose from him—drives him off. Where, now, is he? Having severed all his individual relations, he is manifestly left just in his ideal realm. But there is one tie which he cannot break; he is a father: this bond still unites him to finite existence; or, if he must depart for the ideal world, the daughter must go along. The two, therefore, are put in a vessel together, and reach the magic island. Prospero intimates that it was this relation which saved him, otherwise he would have given that final stroke which dissolves all individual relations:

Mir. Alack, what trouble was I then to you!

Pro. O, a cherubim

Thou wast, that didst preserve me. Thou didst smile
Infused with a fortitude from heaven.

The nature of the transition of Prospero from the real to the ideal world is thus made manifest. It differs, therefore, from "As You Like it," where there is a similar transition, based, however, upon the flight from the World of Wrong.

It also differs from "Midsummer Night's Dream," where there is likewise a similar transition, based, however, upon the flight from the world of Institutions or of Right. But in the "Tempest" this transition is based upon the flight from the whole finite world of conflict, of individual relation, of practical activity; and hence necessarily lands Prospero in the magic island, in an ideal world.

It is furthermore to be noticed that both parties have their just and their unjust element. Prospero is wronged; he is dispossessed of his recognized rights by violence. Yet he himself is not without guilt; the real world has a claim upon him as ruler, which claim he has totally ignored. Hence the play must result in reconciliation and not in the death of the wrong-doers. Prospero as Poet must see both sides and represent them in their truth, and cannot avenge himself as an individual. This drama, therefore, will not have a tragic termination; it must, as previously stated, end in the repentance of the one party and forgiveness of the other.

Prospero thus brings the story of his life down to the tempest, embracing the conflicts of his individual existence. His enemies, wrecked in the ship, are now scattered over the island and in his power. Here begins the action proper of the drama. But behold! Miranda sleeps in the presence of the spirit-world; she is mortal, individual merely—she possesses not the vision and faculty divine. It is no wonder that she cannot choose but sleep in the invisible world, for eyes cannot help her. But who appears here in this spirit-realm? An airy being called Ariel, who seems not to be restrained by any bonds of Space and Time, who flies abroad and performs on land and sea the behests of his master. He was the cause of the shipwreck we now learn, and he gives a vivid account of his feats in that work. Again an explanation is demanded, and we feel compelled to say that Ariel is that element of Prospero before designated as Imagination, which thus gives an account to itself of its own deeds in a poetic form. For Ariel controls the elements, is sovereign over the powers of Nature, and directs them for the accomplishment of his master's purposes. In general, he seems to perform every essential mediation in the entire poem. What possesses this power but Imagination? Yet we must not

press this meaning too closely, for Shakespeare does not allegorize, but always individualizes; he fills out his characters, whether they be natural or supernatural, to their sensuous completeness. We shall observe that there are many sides given which are necessary to the image, but not necessary to the thought even when the thought preponderates. Therefore these Shakespearian creations cannot be interpreted as allegories, in which each particular stroke has its separate signification, but rather the purport of the whole should be seized and its general movement.

But this dainty spirit Ariel is not wholly satisfied with his lot; he has that absolute aspiration of intelligence—nay, of Nature herself—namely, the aspiration for freedom. What is meant here by freedom? merely to get rid of labor and then be idle? We think not; it is rather to accomplish the work in hand—to embody itself in some grand result: this is the toil of Spirit, of the Imagination. The freedom is the realization of its end, when the Imagination has clothed itself in an adequate form, which process, it may be added, can only be completed at the close of the poem; then Ariel is dismissed to the elements. But he never could have been free unless he realized aspiration in an objective form. It will thus be seen that Ariel quite corresponds to that element of Prospero's character which was called Spirit, Intelligence, or the Universal as opposed to the Individual.

But the Poet Prospero proceeds further; he gives a history of Ariel. Once he was the slave of the hag Sycorax, who imprisoned him in a cloven pine because he would not perform her earthy and abhorred commands. Here is presented the conflict which is as old as man, spirit against flesh, Reason against Appetite. Moreover, we see its earliest form: spirit is overcome and is subordinate to flesh, to sense. Hence the groans of Ariel from his prison-house, till at length Prospero comes to the island and frees him. Now he is the servant of Prospero, and transforms himself into every kind of shape which Prospero commands, in order to perform the various mediations of the play. He is at once sent off on an errand, the nature of which will soon be seen.

But what is this other shape which now rises upon our view—a monster, half man, half beast? He is the slave of

Prospero, compelled to perform all the menial duties; in other words, his is the service of sense. His origin is not left in doubt; he is the son of Sycorax, and the heir of her character. Now we behold the opposite of Ariel in every way: Caliban is sense in all its forms, sensuality included. The peculiarity of their names, too, has been noticed by critics: with a slight transposition of letters, aërial becomes Ariel and cannibal becomes Caliban. But at present, under the rule of Prospero, sense is subordinated, is made to serve. Caliban is therefore the natural man whom Prospero has tried to educate, yet without altering his nature—who cannot be anything else but a slave. His knowledge is just sufficient to contest with Prospero the supremacy of the island. The rise of mankind from a state of nature, through language and education, is here indicated. The claim of Caliban to the sovereignty of the island by right of birth, against the right of intelligence, is a rather severe satire upon the principle of legitimacy, which may or may not have been intended by Shakespeare. This antithesis between Prospero and Caliban should be observed, for it will constitute hereafter one of the collisions of the play.

There can hardly be a doubt concerning the main signification of these two figures of the drama. They are not portrayed as human in form, but as unnatural, or, if you please, supernatural; they exhibit one side, one element of man in its excess: Ariel is spirit without sense, Caliban is sense without spirit. They are therefore not human, for man includes both of them. Or, to revert to our abstract terms, we behold the two principles of Prospero's character, the Individual and Universal, objectified into independent forms by the Imagination of the Poet. Moreover, the inherent antithesis and hostility—in other words, the collision between these two principles—is also indicated. Prospero has, so to speak, separated himself into the two contradictory elements of his character and given to each an adequate poetic form, and has also stated their contradiction. But he remains still master over both; they, though opposites, are still his servants, are still the instruments of the Poet, who stands behind and directs their acts. Such is their fundamental representation in the play.

Another relation has been indicated in the poem with distinctness, namely, the relation of the race of Caliban to Art. The foul witch Sycorax is the representative of the Ugly; she has even lost the human form, "with age and envy grown into a hoop." She came from Argier, a land beyond the pale of culture, where spirit is still enslaved in the bonds of sense. But even there she could not live on account of her negative character. She is put on the island, which remains a wild, untamed jungle till the arrival of Prospero. The fate of Ariel has been mentioned as well as his enfranchisement; but at present, under the rule of Prospero, nature is the servant of mind, and is the bearer of its forms; Art is therefore possible since the Sensuous is now controlled by the Spiritual. For Art is spirit expressed in a sensuous form.

So much is introductory. The Poet has elaborated all his instrumentalities, has brought the story of his life down to the time of the action, and is now ready to portray the collisions of the play. Our Ariel brings to the fair maiden a lover—the Poet never fails to do so. By his mysterious music, Ferdinand, one of the ship's company, is led to Miranda. Both fall in love at first sight; the natural unity of sex, which calls forth the Family, asserts itself on the spot. What else could happen? Ferdinand is alone in the world, Miranda is almost so—only her father is known to her. If man and woman belong together, certainly these two must feel their inseparableness, for there is nobody else to whom they can belong. It is the old climax: admiration, sympathy, love. "They are both in either's powers"; each one finds his or her existence in the other. But now appears the obstacle, for the course of true love can never run smooth—at least, in a drama. The collision so frequently portrayed by Shakespeare again arises for a new treatment, that between the will of the parent and the choice of the daughter. Prospero opposes the match, charges Ferdinand with being a traitor and spy, and lays upon him the menial task of removing "some thousands of logs." But Miranda is present with consolation and even offers to assist in the labor; the young prince bravely stands the trial—he is willing to undergo any toil for love's sake. The mutual declaration is made; then fol-

lows the mutual promise; the unity of feeling is complete. It is the essence of all love-stories.

The next time we meet with the father in this connection, he has yielded his objections and sealed their pledge with his consent. But all along we have been aware that his opposition was feigned, that he intended from the start to acquiesce in their marriage. In fact, he was the very person that brought it about. For his conduct he has adduced an external motive: "lest too light winning make the prize light." Still deeper is the design which he cherishes of not only restoring his daughter to his own possessions, but also of making her queen of Naples. But the true internal necessity for his opposition being feigned lies in his double nature. The Poet, who is none other than Prospero himself, interposes an obstacle—the refusal of the parent—which parent, also, is none other than Prospero himself. As father he stands in an individual relation to his daughter and comes into conflict with her; but as Poet he has brought about this conflict, and must solve it by giving validity to the right of choice. Such is the solution demanded by reason, and the one which Shakespeare universally gives to such a collision. Prospero knows, therefore, from the beginning that his daughter will triumph—in fact, that he must make her triumph. The key to his conduct is that the father or individual and the Poet or Universal are one and the same man.

The right of choice is therefore victorious over the will of the parent, a right which, though generally conceded at the present time, was once stoutly contested. Their love has been portrayed through its successive stages: the first predilection, the mutual declaration, the secret plight of troth, the consent of the father. But one thing more remains to be done: the ceremony with full and holy rite must be ministered. Upon this point Prospero lays the greatest stress; he speaks of it no less than three times in different places. Without the formal solemnization of marriage their union cannot be ethical; it can only bring forth the most baleful weeds—hate, disdain, and discord. Lust is not love; indeed it is the destruction of genuine love: a Caliban cannot truly enter the marriage relation. Moreover, the ceremony gives

reality to the Family, which hitherto existed only in the subjective emotions of the parties. Religion (or the State in our time) comes in with its sanction and objectifies their union—makes it an institution in the world.

The marriage rite is therefore not a meaningless and unnecessary formality. Yet the origin and primal basis of the Family is love, which the Poet has here portrayed in all its fervor. But by itself simply, and ungoverned, it degenerates into lust. Our author would teach the lesson, if we understand him, that the ethical element and the emotional element must both be present in true affection; for it is destroyed by the Ethical alone, which is the case when the daughter is wholly obedient, and simply follows the will of the parent, and lets him choose for her. She thus cannot have much intensity in her love, and hence Miranda insists upon her affection, and the father at last yields. On the other hand, passion alone without any ethical restraint is even more fatal to love. Now both these elements in their one-sidedness are represented by Shakespeare as antagonistic to the unity of marriage. The truth is, the Emotional must be regulated, restrained, and made permanent, by the Ethical; and the Ethical, which now takes the form of devotion to husband or wife instead of obedience to parent, must be filled, vivified, and intensified, by the Emotional.

Next comes the masque, whose connection with the rest of the play must be carefully studied, for it reveals more than anything else in the work the special character of Prospero as Poet. He calls up Ariel, who, it will be noticed, always appears when some important mediation of the drama is about to be performed. For what purpose is he now invoked? Mark the language of Prospero:

I must
Bestow upon the eyes of this young couple
Some vanity of mine art; it is my promise
And they expect it from me.

At once there rise up before us the goddesses of the ancient Greek world, the poetical forms of all ages. These, then, are the spirits over which Prospero has power through his minister Ariel; this, too, is his art, which has brought forth all the other wonderful shapes of the poem. They are the beau-

tiful forms of the Imagination, over which the Poet alone has control.

But let us notice the content of this little interlude: what will be its theme? Nothing else but what has already taken place, only in a new form for the lovers, who thus behold a representation of their own unity. The main-spring of the action is Juno, the spouse of the king of Gods and Men; therefore both the type and guardian of wifehood, of chastity, of domestic life. She sends Iris, her many-colored messenger, for Ceres—

A contract of true love to celebrate,
And some donation freely to estate
On the blest lovers.

Such is the object of the visit of the two goddesses, which is still more precisely expressed by each in their songs: Juno particularly confers marriage-blessing and honor—Ceres, physical comfort and prosperity. But mark that Venus and her blind boy are invited to stay away. They represent unholy lust; they plotted the means whereby dusky Dis, or devilish sensuality, carried off the innocent Proserpine, the daughter of Ceres, to the infernal regions. Thus the ethical element is again emphasized.

The relation of Prospero as parent, as individual, has now been portrayed, as well as the collision resulting therefrom and its solution. But he is also Poet, and hence must shadow forth the whole subject in the objective forms of poetry. It has already been pointed out that his feigning an objection to the love-match resulted from his poetical prevision, and hence that such an objection must finally be abandoned. Thus he has manifested in himself, and also depicted in the drama, the collision in the Family. But now, when consent has been given, and the hindrances smoothed over, a second time he appears as Poet, as if to leave no doubt of his nature in the mind of the reader or hearer. He steps back and reproduces in a new poetical dress the substance of the whole story before the lovers. This little play within the play thus has the effect of a double reflection of the action.

New beings appear in order to celebrate the contract of true love; Naiads whose crown is chastity, and the sun-burnt sicklemen whose trait is industry, join in a dance. But,

while Prospero is busy calling up these beautiful shapes from the ideal realm, he suddenly thinks of the conspiracy of Caliban. A new collision against himself as an individual has arisen which demands immediate attention, the real world rushes in upon him, and at once the poetical world vanishes. He is thus reminded that there are other things to be done, other struggles to pass through, and finally other collisions to be portrayed. But he is highly vexed at the interruption, and in his anger he utters the doom of the whole finite world, which sounds like the Last Judgment. It is the most sublime passage of its length to be found in Shakespeare :

And like the baseless fabric of this vision
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

It is just this finite world which is so full of conflict and has caused him so much trouble. No wonder, then, that he almost curses it, and announces its utter perishability. But though the life and works of man, and also the physical globe, are transitory, he is far from saying that mind, the Universal, will thus pass away. On the contrary, he now invokes the latter against destruction, for it is the master over finitude, over the negative powers of the world. Again our Ariel must appear: "Come with a thought." Why? Only because he is thought. He answers, "Thy thoughts I cleave to." Why again? Because he cannot be separated from them. Thus Prospero and Ariel prepare for the conflict with Caliban, the account of which will be taken up in its proper connection.

Such is the first thread; the second is the collision in the State. This is the central movement of the play. Prospero as rightful duke comes into conflict with a usurper, his own brother, who is supported by the king of Naples. Again we see that Prospero, in his individual relation, falls into strife, and is overthrown. The history of his expulsion has already been given, and it must be noticed also that he relates the occurrence as something long antecedent to the play, and not

embraced in its action, though its necessary presupposition. Such has been the wrong done to him. But now the Universal element appears; his enemies are completely in his power; their punishment is to follow.

The tempest has conveniently scattered the ship's company into groups, in one of which are to be found all the offenders. But first there arises a conflict among themselves. There are three good characters—that is, those without guilt—Gonzalo, Adrian, and Francisco; opposed to these are the three wicked ones—Alonso, Antonio, and Sebastian. The two latter show their hatred, especially of the honest Gonzalo, by bitter ridicule, while Alonso is beginning to feel repentance for his deeds through the loss of his son. Yet a deeper retribution appears to be impending over him: he has aided in dethroning a brother; a brother now threatens to dethrone him. The same man whom he assisted seems about to punish him. But his repentance will save him from final overthrow. So much for Alonso; Antonio is a much worse man. His conduct is consistent; he cannot stop in his negative career; he must continue dispossessing and assailing the rights of others, for that is the logical necessity of his character. Having wrongfully expelled his nearest relative, he very naturally begins to plot against his greatest benefactor, the king of Naples. But the poetical mediator Ariel is again on hand to prevent the consummation of the plan; the Poet cannot let the matter end in that way.

The main poetical mediation is next to be accomplished, of course through Ariel. It is reconciliation by repentance. Repentance means that man has the power to make his wicked deed undone, as far as its influence upon his own mind is concerned. He can free himself from remorse, from the consequence of his own negative act. But the repentance must be complete; it includes the confession of the wrong, contrition adequate to its magnitude, and an entire restoration of its advantages. Spirit thus becomes again at peace with itself, and is relieved from its own destructive gnawings. This reconciliation is therefore a spiritual process, and hence must be accomplished by the representative of spirit, Ariel.

The three criminals are in the presence of Prospero, who is invisible to them; they are hence in the presence of their

own wrong; retribution is at hand. Again we urge upon the reader to keep in mind the double nature of Prospero: as individual he has suffered these injuries, but as universal he is the Poet who mediates and portrays them. He therefore puts into operation his spirit-world, whose main object is now to excite conscience, to rouse remorse. They are hungry; a banquet is spread before them by several strange shapes. When the king and the rest begin eating, the banquet vanishes. Thus it is indicated to them that a power beyond their consciousness is at work in the isle. Here he is—Ariel—who now drops his invisible form and appears to them like a harpy, the symbol of vengeance. He calls himself Destiny, or a minister of Fate; his function is retribution. He comes to avenge the wrong done to Prospero,

. for which foul deed
The powers, delaying, not forgetting, have
Incensed the seas and shores, yea, all creatures,
Against your peace. Thee of thy son, Alonso,
They have bereft; and do pronounce by me
Lingering perdition—worse than any death—

So far it resembles that external power which the Greeks called Fate, and which even controlled Jupiter himself. But is there no salvation from the wicked deed? Hear Ariel again:

. . . whose [the powers'] wraths to guard you from—
Which here in this most desolate isle else falls
Upon your heads—is nothing but heart's sorrow,
And a clear life ensuing.

What a wonderful change! Ariel is no longer the representative of Grecian Fate, but is a preacher of Christian Gospel, whose doctrine is repentance—"heart's sorrow and a clear life ensuing." Man can now avoid the retribution of ancient Destiny. Though Ariel has assumed this shape to the wicked three, yet the reader has all along known that it was merely a poetical form; that Ariel, in reality, is not a minister of Fate, but of Prospero, of spirit, of self-determination.

Thus the three "men of sin" are brought to a consciousness of their crimes; they wax desperate at their guilt, which now reacts negatively upon their minds—"like poison, 'gins to bite the spirits.'" The innocent three weep over them, "brimful of sorrow and dismay." When the guilty have

sufficiently atoned for the wrongs which they have committed, Prospero is ready to grant forgiveness; he declares that their repentance is "the sole drift of his purpose." The frenzy begins to subside after they enter his charmed circle; gradually reason returns, and Prospero, though invisible, tells to their innermost conscience the nature of their crimes and the consequent punishment. All is now plain to them subjectively. But, to remove the last doubt, Prospero presents himself to their eyes looking just as when he was Duke of Milan, and confirms his previous utterances. Alonso, in particular, repents in the most heartfelt manner, surrenders the advantages of his wrong, and asks pardon; he makes his deed undone as far as lies in his power. Therefore his son is restored to him: the marriage of Ferdinand and Miranda receives blessing; thus it is ethically complete, having received the sanction of both parents.

It is evident that the ability which the mind possesses of healing its own wounds, of cancelling its own negative deeds, is here portrayed. Spirit alone can reconcile itself with itself and come to inner harmony. For if it is truly universal, it must have the power to mediate all its conflicts. Therefore the play cannot have a tragic termination, as was before stated. It must end in reconciliation, mediation. Prospero himself, in his highest potency, represents this absolute might of spirit, which cannot succumb to any struggle, but must overcome every conflict. Though Shakespeare has to a certain extent employed the heathen form of Fate, he has truly expressed the Christian doctrine of Repentance.

We are now ready to take up the third thread, the collision between Prospero and Caliban. The character and origin of the latter have already been noticed; it was stated that he represented the natural man—man still immersed in his senses and not yet elevated to a rational existence. He therefore must collide with the world of spirit represented by Prospero, for the reason that it necessarily subordinates him and even reduces him to a slave. Such is the function of the senses—they are the pack-horses of intelligence; and the physical man, even if he constitute the whole man, must follow the same law. Caliban is therefore a menial of the lowest type, and is set to performing the most degrading

services for Prospero. His ignorance and utter slavishness to the External are manifest from the fact that he cannot comprehend either the mediations of Spirit or of Nature; he regards them as ghosts and goblins sent to torment him.

But Caliban has not always been in this condition of servitude. Prospero found him on the island, treated him with the greatest kindness, taught him to speak, and admitted him to his own family. The result was an attempt to violate the honor of his daughter. Prospero has now learned the very important distinction that an animal is an animal and must be subordinated, at least not admitted to social equality. There is a difference between a man and a brute notwithstanding our so-called humanitarians. By ignoring this distinction we do not elevate the lower, but inevitably degrade the higher. "I had peopled else this isle with Calibans" is the threat of the beast. Thus passes away the high-pressure humanity of Prospero when it comes in contact with the reality.

Such is the man-monster in the family relation; our author is now going to bring him before us in his political and also in his religious character. Every American can study the picture with profit at the present time. Caliban is in deadly enmity with Prospero. The ship also—or the real world, if you please—has its sensual element as well as the island or the ideal world. The next thing, therefore, is the appearance of the representatives of this element, Trinculo and Stephano. They, too, have been separated from the ship's company by the tempest, and from a natural attraction of character have been brought together with Caliban. Here we see the sensual trio made up from the ship and the island. The two strangers bear the stamp of reality, are men of flesh and blood, belong therefore to prosaic life and speak in prose; while Caliban, since he is a native of the island, is strictly a poetical being and speaks in verse. There is also a distinction between Trinculo and Stephano, the former being not so much jester as coward, craven in spirit, with the fear of the External always before his eyes; the latter being a drunkard, the slave of appetite. Caliban represents both persons, for he is mortally afraid of the imaginary spirits,

and he swallows with the wildest ecstasy the contents of Stephano's wine-bottle.

Caliban's religion now appears also; he deifies the man who has gratified his appetite. Yet he himself remains a slave and performs the same servile duties; he will kiss the foot of the new deity, dig pig-nuts for him, and carry all his wood—a task which is so irksome to do for Prospero. But he thinks he has obtained freedom, which to him means the reign of sensuality. The mob seems to have broken loose from the strong hand of Prospero, lust and violence hope now to rule triumphant, and the ominous shout of drunken bestiality falls upon the ear: "Freedom, hey-day, hey-day, freedom! freedom, hey-day, freedom!" It is curious that Shakespeare has endowed two beings so completely opposite as Ariel and Caliban with the same aspiration for freedom. He has thus indicated the two great definitions of that word which have always divided mankind. The one means unrestrained lust and anarchy, the other means liberty through institutions; the one is the realization of sensuality, the other is the realization of reason.

But the political side is still further developed. Such beings must have some conflict among themselves, which Ariel, our poetical mediator, does not fail to bring about. It only ends, however, in a beating given to the coward Trinculo, who is innocent. But they have a common enemy, the present lord of the island, against whom they now conspire. It is King Stephano against King Prospero, the Sensual trying to dethrone the Rational. Stephano is not without his worshippers to-day. He represents the demagogue in the political world, who rules the rabble by gratifying their passions, himself being the incarnation of those passions. He thus unites the worst elements of society in a crusade against all established order and right. It will be noticed, also, that not the least attraction for their "freedom" is the fair Miranda; both Family and State are to be subjected to unbridled lust. But their very nature is turned against them; their innate tendency to theft leads them aside from their purpose, and they are caught in their own toils. Still they cannot reach Prospero; he is spirit, knows of their schemes, and sends

upon them retribution in the shape of dogs and hounds—turns against them their own passions. He is thus victorious in this final collision—all his enemies are now in his power—he has mastered the conflicts of his individual existence. Nay, farther, he has not merely punished, but even reconciled, all his enemies. Caliban himself submits, manifests hearty repentance, and is cured of his delusive worship. Sense thus yields to reason. Such is the truly positive function of spirit: to bring all into harmony with itself, to make all reflect its own image. It may crush out with its power; but that is a negative result, and really no solution of a conflict. The highest attainment of intelligence may be expressed by just this word—reconciliation. The colliding individuals of the play are now united in spirit, and the harmony is perfect. They all have come to see the nature of their deeds; this is their common insight, and therefore their common concord: furthermore, they hasten to make their deed undone. Hence, when the criminals arrive at this island, their destiny is to rise above their hitherto selfish, individual existence, and become reconciled with the Rational, the Universal.

Thus Prospero has changed all his enemies into an image of himself, and has made them participate, to a certain extent at least, in his own double character. Each person through repentance reflects Prospero, and places himself in unity with him. Nor must his double nature be considered anything strange or unknown. It is found more or less developed in every soul. As a moral, and particularly as a thinking being, man must solve the conflicts of his individual existence. Indeed, the sum of all conflicts, and the greatest of all contradictions, is the one above mentioned which in abstract language was called that between the Individual and Universal. Nay, the mightiest of men—for he was a man—whose spirit, however, raised him to be a divinity—Christ himself—was he not the embodiment of this contradiction? A celebrated sarcasm was once uttered concerning him: “Yes, Christ was able to save the whole world, but couldn’t save himself.” True, and his chief merit. Christ as individual was necessarily involved in the struggles of the world and perished; but as spirit he created it anew, and made it,

so to speak, a different world, for its history since his time is the history of Christianity. So, too, Prospero as an individual is overwhelmed with the collisions of life, but as spirit he has mastered and portrayed them, and even converted his enemies into his own image.

Prospero's career is now at an end, his work is done when the reconciliation is completed. He calls up once more the world of spirits who have been his faithful instrumentalities, in order to bid them farewell forever. He abjures his rough magic, his art; and soon he will break his staff, bury it in the earth, and drown his book. For the present Ariel is retained, who brings together the entire company, and restores even the ship. "Then to the elements," the play ends, his poetical activity ceases.

The relation of the play to Shakespeare himself has frequently been discussed. Long ago a critic suggested that Prospero was Shakespeare. But the mistake has been that the play was supposed to represent Shakespeare's individual life. It might be taken as a portraiture of his poetic, universal life, or that of any great poet. Other mighty individuals have been suggested in place of Prospero, but in such cases there is merely the substitution of one name for another, whereby however nothing is explained. We can only say, as we began, Prospero is the Poet generically, who, in the first place, embodies the manifold themes of his art in a dramatic form; and, in the second place, portrays himself in the act, portrays himself performing his own process also in a dramatic form. The drama can go no further; it has attained the universality of Thought.

Here also can be found the reason why it is impossible to give a theatrical representation of this play. What form shall we assign to Ariel and Caliban? A child for the one, and a low human shape for the other? Then we feel the impossible chasm which shuts off the poet's creation from the stage. The illustrative art is equally impotent in reaching these conceptions. Why is this? Because Ariel and Caliban are thoughts more than images; they are not only far beyond the realm of sensuous representation, but even begin to transcend the realm of pure imagination; hence we can read them and think them, but cannot image them with

clearness; they lie too far in the sphere of unpicturable thought.

If we now put together the beginning and the end of the drama, we find that Prospero departs from the Real, passes through the Ideal, and returns to the Real. The middle stage is alone portrayed in the play. It would seem, therefore that Prospero, being forced to abandon the practical world on account of his devotion to his books and his art, solves in his theoretical domain all the contradictions of finite existence, and thus returns in triumph to the practical world. Thought therefore, though at first antagonistic, finally restores action. Here we behold the theme of Goethe's "Faust," yet treated in a very different manner. But, though it touches the real world at both ends, its action lies wholly in the ideal world.

We have now arrived at the point where we can see the unifying principle of three of Shakespeare's most important works, namely, "As You Like it," "Midsummer Night's Dream," and "Tempest." That principle is mediation through an ideal world. In "As You Like it," this world is idyllic, exhibits a primitive pastoral existence, hence approaches what is actual; but in the remaining two it is wholly supernatural. The three constitute a new species of drama, which belongs to Shakespeare alone. Though other poets have used similar materials and means, yet their products have been entirely different from these plays not only in degree of excellence but also in kind. The general movement is the same in all three: a breach in the real world, a transition to the ideal world where the breach is healed, and a return to the real world. The fundamental distinction between them—though they are not at all alike in details—lies in the fact that in "As You Like it" there is no self-reflection of any kind, hence it is the simplest in structure; that in "Midsummer Night's Dream" the objective dramatic action reflects itself in the "play within the play"; that in "Tempest" the subjective process of the Poet reflects itself along with the action. Taken together they constitute a dramatic cyclus, and may be called the ideal dramas of Shakespeare.
